

Remarks/Arguments

Reconsideration of this application is requested.

Claims 1-29 have been rejected by the Examiner under 35 USC § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Delfer (U.S. Patent No. 5,496,991).

The Examiner stated the following on page 3 of the November 15, 2007, Final Rejection.

“Pintsov discloses scanning by the post the code on the mail piece before the mail piece is delivered to the creditor (the bill is scanned and payment by mailer is made through electronic funds transfer-col. 8, lines).”

Pintsov discloses the following in lines 25-40 of column 8.

"Reference is now made to FIG. 7 which is a flow chart of the operations performed by the mailer in processing a bill received from the carrier. A bill is received from a carrier either in hard copy form or via a modem at 702. A determination is then made at 704 whether the bill is in hard copy form in which case the bill is scanned at 706. In either case, either by scanning or by processing, the encrypted billing data including the bill identification is obtained at 708. The encrypted information is decrypted by the mailer using the mailers private key SK_M at 710. The billing data is thereafter verified against the mailers own records at 712. If a determination is made at 714 that the carriers bill data and the mailer's records match, the mailer may authorize payment of the bill at 716. If no match occurs, the matter is scheduled for resolution at 718. The payment by the mailer may be by electronic funds transfer.”

Pintsov discloses a system in which a mailer is processing a bill received from a carrier and determining whether or not the mailer is going to pay the carrier for delivering the mailers mail.

The Examiner stated the following on page 3 of the November 15, 2007, Final Rejection.

“Delfer discloses creating an electronic funds transaction for the amount indicated in the code between the bill recipient's bank account and the creditor's bank

account (consumer pre-authorization for funds transfer transaction-col. 4, lines 8-10) and transferring funds from the bill recipient's bank account to the creditor's bank account (biller service provider transfers funds into appropriate vendor account-co. 4, lines 8-15)."

Delfer discloses the following in col. 4, lines 1-15.

"Consumers are introduced to the subject invention automated remittance system by literature distributed by either the vendors or preferably the billing service provider. Accompanying the informational materials are approval cards 2. Also, direct telephone or personal contact with the consumers, followed by mailed approval cards 2 is contemplated by this disclosure. The consumer completed approval cards 2, signifying consumer pre-authorization for a funds transfer transaction, are returned to the vendor or billing service provider, preferably the billing service provider. The approval cards 2 acknowledge that, at individual consumer initiated times, the billing service provider (or vendor) is to electronically transfer funds into appropriate vendors' (or vendor's) accounts."

Delfer discloses an automated remittance system where consumers pre-authorization are obtained by a billing system provides to initiate electronic transfer of funds.

Delfer and/or Pintsov do not disclose or anticipate steps d, e and f of claim 1 namely,

(d) scanning by the post the code on the mail piece before the mail piece is delivered to the creditor;

(e) creating an electronic funds transaction for the amount indicated in the code between the bill recipient's bank account and the creditor's bank account; and

(f) transferring funds from the bill recipient's bank account to the creditor's bank account.

Delfer and/or Pintsov also do not disclose or anticipate steps a, c and d of claim 15, namely,

(a) delivering a billing mail piece from a creditor to a bill recipient, the billing mail piece including a bill and a bill-paying return mail piece.

Pintsov does not disclose a system that enables consumer bill recipients to pay their bills via a carrier.

Applicants claimed invention enable a company to send a bill to a bill recipient that contains a bill-paying return portion in the form of a mail piece having a Planet code and Postnet bar code that reference the bill recipient and amount to be paid on the outside of mail piece, so that when a scanner at the USPS reads the code, the bill recipient's bank account will be debited for the entire amount of the bill, or a minimum payment that is due for the bill, or a minimum payment for the bill plus a specified amount.

In view of the above claims 1-29 are patentable. If the Examiner has any questions would the Examiner, please contact the undersigned at the telephone number noted below.

Please charge any additional fees that may be required or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account Number 16-1885.

Respectfully submitted,

/Ronald Reichman/
Ronald Reichman
Reg. No. 26,796
Attorney of Record
Telephone (203) 924-3854

PITNEY BOWES INC.
Intellectual Property and
Technology Law Department
35 Waterview Drive
P.O. Box 3000
Shelton, CT 06484-8000